

Guidance on Single Status Job Redesign Meetings With Services

This handout is intended to explain the purpose of this round of meetings between the Single Status Project Team and Service Management;

It seeks to provide

1. Background on Council Decisions in place
2. A review of background assumptions
3. A summary of the detailed objectives
4. An overview of the proposed process
5. Guidelines on which posts to focus on at this stage
6. Re-evaluations of post which have changed significantly
7. Redesign guidance;
 - Credibility
 - Achievability
 - Deliverability
 - Desirability
 - Affordability
 - Timing
8. Required Outputs
 - Overall Statements
 - Summary Records
 - Post by Post Records
9. Quality Control
10. Consultation & Communications

1 - Council Decisions

July 4th Council Report Recommendations

13.2 Confirm that it supports re-design with Job Families as the preferred method to progress single status. With the target that payments to those staff deserving pay rises can be brought to an early conclusion, but significantly fewer staff find their pay reducing.

13.3 Confirm that a planning timetable for union ballots and staff consultation from December 2007 with implementation in April 2008 is an acceptable target and should be the basis of project development in partnership with staff and unions.

13.4 Require the investigation of the detailed cost estimates for single status implementation options based on job family / job re-design in consultation with managers, staff and unions and report these to Council next meeting cycle

September 12th Council Report Recommendations

11.2 Endorse the membership and remit of the Single Status Steering Group to co-ordinate consultation, investigation, negotiations and progress monitoring for this project as set out in appendix 1.

11.3 Confirm that staff consultative arrangements for Single Status are transferred from the Staff JCC to the Single Status Steering Group.

11.4 Endorse the continuing investigation of the detailed costs and benefits for single status implementation based on job family / job re-design in consultation with managers, staff and unions. And report again to Council next meeting cycle

11.5 Continue to require that all affected staff are fully informed and consulted through this exercise.

The objective of these meetings is to help deliver the recommendations set out above.

2 - Background Assumptions

Service management should have been provided with comprehensive briefing around Single Status, where this Council is with that, and the Job Evaluation system that underpins it.

Service managers should have a developing understanding of the Job Redesign and Job Families approaches which the Council is investigating for application in Single Status.

Service management and Project Team should have full availability of data from previous Job Evaluation exercises, and other relevant pay and grading data about their posts.

Service Management and Project Team should have a common understanding of the decisions required and how they should be recorded.

Outline Job Families should be available to service management and the project team.

3 - Detailed Objectives

The Council requires us to determine whether staff who were going to reduce in pay under the previous Single Status proposals could undertake enhanced or redesigned duties to provide some opportunity to maintain their pay levels closer to current levels.

Overall estimated costs for a range of levels of redesign are currently being established, up to the possibility that is generally achieved. (Aug / Sept)

This next phase of the project (Sept / Oct) is essentially about consulting services to evaluate;

- Whether job redesign is CREDIBLE in terms of the changes to duties that may be required
- Whether undertaking those duties is ACHIEVEABLE in terms of the capabilities and / or potential of existing staff
- Whether the personal development required for staff is DELIVERABLE individually, and for the affected workforce as a whole
- Whether the job redesign that might be needed is DESIRABLE in terms of Service Delivery now and into the future.
- Overall AFFORDABILITY in terms of realistic productivity or efficiency gains for services if this job redesign is implemented, and what cost recovery might be achieved going forward.

- What TIMETABLES are appropriate for the final determination of redesign for particular posts, and the assumption of their redesigned duties. (latest deadline could be March 2011)

Once the costs and practicality of the exercise have been gathered and presented to Council, and a decision made about continuing down this track, then detailed consultation with employees can be done. (Nov / Dec).

4 - Proposed Process

Services will be provided with a spreadsheet showing;

- each post,
- its JE score (both as a total & detailed factor by factor) ,
- its current salary,
- the target points that post would need to achieve to maintain basic pay
- any points gap.

Posts will also be classified by the Job Family they have been initially assigned to by the project team. These assignments will have to be confirmed which will no doubt take quite a bit of discussion in some cases, however the assignments are not critical at this stage for costing. Nevertheless it is a key step in communicating with staff about where they will feature in a redesigned structure, and for supporting aspects of quality control, so it will be important to get it right as soon as possible.

From there the best way to progress will depend on a number of factors which will vary between services. These will include the overall scale of the challenge in terms of the size of gaps and numbers affected, the nature of the specific posts involved, potential changes in service requirements or demands. I would expect that a general discussion of that context, and no doubt clarification of some initial questions will be the starting point. It will be necessary to have any existing or potential plans for restructuring, service changes, upcoming developments in demands or constraints to be tabled by service management.

5 - Posts to focus on at this stage

The priority in this phase of the overall exercise is to investigate the position of posts which had been evaluated at lower pay rates than the occupants are being paid (REDS). There may be requirements to reassess the duties of some posts who were not in that category if redesign exercises become wide ranging or if transfers of specific duties is involved. However at this stage we have not been instructed to engage in a general exercise of re-evaluating posts who were evaluated higher or have stayed the same (GREENS and YELLOWS).

If Job Redesign generally proves an achievable and affordable route forward there will be an opportunity for all posts to be considered at later stages to determine whether they could deliver service improvement, efficiency and productivity.

For Single Status generally “Reducing pay” is principally defined by basic pay rates. However there are a limited number of posts where proposed changes in terms and conditions are so substantial they were resulting in potential losses in take home pay (20% - 36%) that significantly contributed to the “unacceptability” of the withdrawn offer.

The posts I am aware of in that category are;

- Nursery Nurses
- Class 8A Ferry Staff (Papa Stour & Fair Isle)
- Tug Crews
- Pilot Launch Crews
- Pilots

These posts, and like others if they emerge, should also be considered for Job Redesign as a possibility in finding a route to help maintain overall pay if that is justified in terms of the duties the posts undertake and the feasibility / desirability in making changes. It is unlikely that this can provide a full solution for these posts, however it would be valuable to have considered the option for them. These posts may also be considered for “market forces” supplements by comparing them with other authorities or employers to determine their relative status to market rates.

Equally there are a limited number of posts which lose on basic pay evaluation but overall win when amended terms and conditions are taken into account. They are not the same priority for redesign at this stage as they did not create the take home pay loss that challenged the “acceptability” of the withdrawn offer and created the concern that the Council wanted to address.

6 - Re-Evaluations Based on Current Duties

From there I would suggest that the first pass should be to identify those posts which management and the project team agree have changed significantly since evaluation point, and an updated evaluation based on current duties is required. Given these changes must have been within the relatively recent past Service Management should be sufficiently aware of the current duties to inform a re-evaluation with the relevant HR Advisor. This new evaluation would then provide the start point for any assessment of Job Redesign. It will be necessary to agree this redesign with the post holder, but that is essentially the same agreement that will be needed with a “redesign” post holder and would be part of the comprehensive staff consultation exercise generally planned for November / December.

7 - Overall Redesign Guidance

The sequence of detailed activity and sequence of through the list of posts in each service depend on numbers and the size of the journey required in each area. However it will probably be logical to consider redesign options family by family, relationships between posts and hierarchies should be clearer. For some posts the options may be relatively simple, others will pose more significant challenges. At this stage no options are excluded and none are preferred, all options should be considered against the criteria set out above. It may well be that as experience builds in considering the potential for redesign in different areas and against different factors more detailed advice and guidance of do's and don'ts and cross Council standards develop.

It is also anticipated that "typical" JE patterns will emerge for "family levels" as we develop our job family definitions and more posts become more clearly allocated to families. This will provide further input to managers and the project team on the most likely areas to consider for the redesign of duties.

It is inevitable that there will be several iterations of this process, additional information from JE files may be required, discussions with other Managers may be needed, consultation with staff might be required, perhaps members and service clients views might need to be sought if redesign is very substantial. It may be that the timetable for some decisions is extended and it may be the case that no complete solution for some posts can be identified.

Guidance on how to deal with some of these most complex situations will only be possible to detail as they move from the hypothetical to the actual. Some partial redesigns will be possible, in some cases it might be difficult or impossible to find any practical redesign at this point in time. However as a general observation there is a clear need to determine the way forward on enough of this exercise by the end of October to decide whether it is generally feasible, other aspects have a more flexible timescale extending to March 2011 potentially for final delivery. The Council also has well established processes and procedures for redeployment of staff who are unable to continue in their current role, and these could become relevant in some situations.

7.1 - General Credibility Guidance

It is possible to suggest almost any change in duties or responsibilities for posts. However it will be essential to be realistic in terms of whether any potential changes relate to work that needs to be done to deliver services. There also needs to be confidence that when duties are examined in the future they will actually being done. This will require some informed judgements about how service needs and demands are going to develop into the future. However that is a necessary activity for managers in any case and should enhance service and other forward planning. It is no more

than common sense to observe that the greater the level of change proposed the more careful the thinking and planning will need to be to deliver it successfully.

7.2 - Achievability for Existing Staff Guidance

It is also an exercise in common sense to evaluate the capabilities and development potential that current staff have to consider whether there is a realistic potential for them to develop their capabilities to assume varying levels of increased skill, responsibilities or demands. Redesign is not about expecting staff to do more of the same, it is about doing things differently. However that must be practicably achievable for staff before there is any point in them embarking on the journey.

7.3 - Personal Development Deliverability Guidance

This is affected by a combination of the capacity of staff to develop their skills and capabilities, the time to achieve that development, the availability of the training and the availability of resources to pay for it. Some of these are individual or specialised issues. Others are aggregate issues relating to staff cover, training spaces or overall training costs. The project team will be seeking to gather as much information as possible in this area to help plan for delivery and highlight bottlenecks. General observations would include that there is potentially 3 hours available for staff working 37 hours rather than 34 to consider for development activity during an implementation phase and that the Council overall invests more than £1 million per annum in staff development part of which at least is capable of being prioritised to assist development.

7.4 - Service Delivery Desirability Guidance

This principally relates to benefits that would be generated in enhanced or extended service delivery through the redesign of duties for individuals or groups of staff. If there are current or emerging gaps in service delivery that need to be addressed it may be possible to do that through redesign. However if redesigning duties will create gaps then that is undesirable. This again requires a significant effort in service analysis and planning however should complement other exercises which managers are expected to discharge in any case.

7.5 - Long Run Affordability Guidance

The overall affordability of increased wage costs is clearly a significant constraint to this project and a problem that the Council is grappling with in any case. If job redesign is to present an affordable solution for the Council in the long term then the greater the payback in future years in terms of increased efficiency and productivity allowing other cost saving measures the greater acceptability there will be for short term investment. Potential cost recoveries in the medium long term might include the future replacement of a proportion of higher cost posts discharging extended

duties with more focused and less costly posts carrying out more specific tasks. An immediate compensating saving might be the potential to delete some current vacant posts by delivering their duties through the redesign of surrounding posts. Another source of saving might lie in the capability of staff with greater skills or flexibility to meet an emerging service need, that would have to be dealt with anyway, without extending numbers or further increasing grades of staff, perhaps current staff could be developed to fill new posts that service demand indicated was necessary. Increased productivity or efficiency could also result in external costs of consultants or bought in services being required. Information on potential savings will also be collated by the project team to allow the complete cost / benefit to be reported.

7.6 - Timetable Guidance

Job Redesign is essentially an exercise in workforce and service development. Both of these activities are long term in nature rather than being “one off” events. There are clear deadlines, pressures and constraints on the Single Status project timetable however not all of them are short term. The national agreement has provision for a three year “preservation” period and it would appear acceptable to regard that as a reasonable period for other transitional arrangements. While we have to reach a conclusion on the general affordability, acceptability and affordability of this approach it does not follow that we must or should attempt to have every I dotted and t crossed before employee consultation or implementation could begin. There are a number of development and training activities that could well require an extended period to design and deliver and that being phased over time will be necessary. It is also quite rational to acknowledge that some job and service redesign will depend on significant data gathering and evaluation exercise on service demands and delivery options. Particularly where there are significant redesign exercises anticipated or timetabled already it may well be realistic to accept that we cannot deliver an early or rushed redesign. That might require some posts or service areas being set aside for the moment with a timetable specified for actual redesign and period of salary preservation in the interim the best offer that can be properly made at this point in time. It is also necessary to consider that the assumption of enhanced duties might be dependant on some specific element of individual development or capability being achieved. This would be most clearly instanced by the requirement to achieve some training or educational qualification which was a prerequisite to an enhanced job evaluation. The implementation of this might also require a combination of redesign and preservation during the period it was being achieved.

8 - Proposed Outputs

8.1 - Overall Statements

Summaries from Service Management and the Project Team on each of the significant criteria listed below will be expected as redesign evaluation progresses.

- General Credibility
- Existing Staff Achievability
- Personal Development Deliverability
- Service Delivery Desirability
- Long Run Affordability
- Timetabling of Redesign Delivery

8.2 - Updated spreadsheet showing;

The ongoing status for each service will need to be tracked to show

- Which posts have been re-evaluated on the basis of current duties
- Which have been considered for job redesign
- Which posts are likely to change for other reasons in any case and redesign is inappropriate at present
- Which have had job redesign successfully agreed
- Which are judged to be beyond feasible job redesign
- Which job redesign changes are most achievable and desirable and which are most challenging. (so that a reduced investment could be translated into posts included / excluded).
- Quality control confirmations

8.3 - Post by Post records

Detailed records of changes proposed / agreed for each post type will be required to provide an audit trail. This will include records of the activities and results from

- Re-evaluations
- Job Redesign options
- Management / Project Team agreement on recommended redesign
- Personal development activities required to deliver redesign duties
- Timetable / criteria for assumption of redesigned duties.
- Results of quality control exercises

9 - Quality Control

It is anticipated that Union representatives and officer members of the project team not actively engaged in service by service redesign will perform general quality control. Further quality control and consistency lops may be introduced as necessary.

10.1 - Consultation between levels of management

Service managers Service Heads and Executive Directors will be expected to discharge quality control, option preference and sign-off roles in relation to the completion of redesign activities. The balance of these responsibilities will develop as we work our way through affected posts and will also differ depending on the circumstances found in each service. The more significant redesign being proposed the more critical that all levels of management have a thorough understanding and agreement on the way forward.

10.2 - Consultation and communication with affected employees

Staff will be generally advised that this redesign exercise is being embarked on through the report to Council on the 12th September and newsletters before and after that meeting.

Employees may well have valuable ideas which could contribute to the exercise. And their willingness to accept the potential challenge it poses are important. Therefore managers will be encouraged to discuss the activity will individuals and staff groups.

Managers will be provided with information and guidance on how to present that information and deal with typical enquiries, bearing in mind that full employee briefing is anticipated in November / December.

It is likely that conversations will be quite varied depending on the nature and redesign requirement in different areas.

10.3 - Union Participation

Union members of the project team will be included in job redesign activities as appropriate, and in any case will have full access to records of progress / recommendations / decisions.